

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
HA-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /074 W  
-----041125 012204Z /13  
R 312041Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000  
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, PINR, SHUM, NU  
SUBJECT: SOMOZA INTERVIEW

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT SOMOZA GAVE ONE HOUR INTERVIEW TO INDEPENDENT TV COMMENTATOR JULIO VIVAS BERNARD WHICH WAS BROADCAST MAY 28. SOMOZA SPOKE AT LENGTH ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS, THE ECONOMIC SITUATION, AND THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE SOMOZAS IN NICARAGUA. THERE WERE NO REVELATIONS BUT BECAUSE OPPOSITIONISTS ARE SOUL-SEARCHING WHETHER ANYTHING CAN BE GAINED FROM CONTACTS WITH SOMOZA, THEY WILL BE CAREFULLY STUDYING HIS MESSAGE (THE TEXT OF WHICH WAS PRINTED IN NOVEDADES OF MAY 30). END SUMMARY

1. PRESIDENT SOMOZA GAVE ONE HOUR TAPED INTERVIEW TO INDEPENDENT TV COMMENTATOR JULIO VIVAS BERNARD. VIVAS HAD SPOKEN WITH EMBOFFS ABOUT THE INTERVIEW IN ADVANCE AND SAID SOMOZA SUGGESTED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO DISUCSS HUMAN RIGHTS IN NICARAGUA. VIVAS BEGAN THE INTERVIEW ASKING SOMOZA FOR HIS DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND WHETHER HE AGREED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S DEFINITION.

2. SOMOZA REPLIEE "YES, I COINCIDE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN THE DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HUMAN RIGHTS ARE THOSE RIGHTS INHERENT TO A PERSON WITHIN A STATE." HE WENT ON TO REFER TO PROTECTION  
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IN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT AND THE NICARAGUAN CONSTITUTION OF RIGHTS TO LIBERTY, LIFE, WRITTEN AND SPOKEN EXPRESSION, TRAVEL, EMIGRATION, WORK, AND PROPERTY. VIVAS THEN ASKED WHY NICARAGUA WAS UNDER SERIOUS ACCUSATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. SOMOZA EXPOUNDED AT LENGTH UPON THE EFFICIENT INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY DIRECTED AGAINST NICARAGUA, ADDING THAT HE BELIEVED A DEBATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN NICARAGUA WOULD OCCUR SOON AND THAT THE GON WOULD BE CLEARED

OF ALL ACCUSATIONS.

3. VIVAS THEN ASKED WHY THE NATIONAL GUARD (GN) BECAME INVOLVED IN ACTIONS NOT RELATED TO GUERRILLAS, I.E., AGAINST STUDENTS SOMOZA REPLIED THAT THE MISSION OF THE GN WAS THE PRESERVATION OF ORDER AND THAT, AS THE ONLY ARMED BODY LEGALLY IN EXISTENCE, ITS FUNCTION WAS BOTH THAT OF MILITARY AND OF POLICE. WHILE THE GN HAD THE INHERENT RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE, ANY ABUSES BY GUARDSMEN WERE DEALT WITH JUDICIALLY. THERE HAVE BEEN, HE CONTINUED, "VERY FEW DOCUMENTED" CASES OF ABUSE.

4. VIVAS THEN ASKED HOW SOMOZA EXPLAINED THE HUNDREDS OF PERSONS WHO HAD DISAPPEARED AND WHERE THEY WERE. IN ANSWERING, SOMOZA AGAIN CITED THE "INSIDIOUS CAMPAIGN" MENTIONED IN PARA 2. HE SAID THAT RELATIVES -- NO GROUPS ALLEGEDLY ACTING ON THEIR BEHALF -- MUST INITIATE COMPLAINTS BEFORE COMPETENT JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT DURING FIGHTS BETWEEN THE GN AND GUERRILLAS, MANY HAVE BEEN WOUNDED AND THAT, WHILE GN AND CIVIL AUTHORITY CASUALTIES WERE KNOWN, NO ONE KNEW HOW MANY OF THE OTHERS WOUNDED HAD GON OFF TO DIE. FOR THESE DISAPPEARED PEOPLE TO BE REAL, IT MUST BE PROVED THAT THEY EXISTED, HE SAID. THE GON, HE CONTINUED, HAS NO FEAR OF AN INVESTIGATION BECAUSE, WITH A GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, THERE ARE ALWAYS ABJECT PEOPLE AND THESE ARE THE RESULTS OF GUERRILLA VIOLENCE PERPETRATED AGAINST AN ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENT. SOMOZA ADDED THAT HE HAD SOUGHT PRECISE INFORMATION FROM PRIESTS REGARDING DISAPPEARANCES AND HAD LEARNED THAT THEY WERE ONLY REPEATING THINGS THEY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD HEARD FROM OTHERS.

5. WHY, ASKED VIVAS, HAD NICARAGUA NOT INVITED THE IAHRC TO VISIT. BECAUSE, SAID SOMOZA, THE IAHRC HAS NOT ASKED TO VISIT. RATHER, CERTAIN COUNTRIES WERE USING THE IAHRC FOR THEIR OWN INTERNAL POLITICAL PURPOSES AND ALLEGING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN NICARAGUA. IF THE IAHRC INDICATES A DESIRE TO VISIT, THE GON WILL HAPPILY RECEIVE THEM AT A TIME OF THE GON'S CHOOSING. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF SUCH A VISIT WOULD HAVE TO BE DECIDED BY THE GON BECAUSE INTERNAL PRESSURE GROUPS WOULD ATTEMPT TO USE THE IAHRC FOR THEIR OWN ENDS. SOMOZA ADDED THAT NICARAGUA HAS NOTHING AGAINST THE IAHRC BUT RESENTED OTHER STATES TRYING TO USE IT TO INTERVENE IN NICARAGUAN AFFAIRS. IN NICARAGUA, THERE IS NO CONSISTENT VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. IF IT HAPPENS, IT IS INVOLUNTARY AS, AFTER ALL, "WE ARE NOT ALL PERFECT." TO DATE, SIX COMPLAINTS AGAINST NICARAGUA HAVE BEEN MADE BEFORE THE IAHRC. ALL HAVE BEEN ANSWERED.

6. VIVAS THEN ASKED FOR AN EXPLANATION OF CONTINUING JUDGMENTS MADE AND FINES LEVIED AGAINST JOURNALISTS, ESPECIALLY BROADCAST JOURNALISTS FOR REPORTING NEWS. SOMOZA ANSWERED THAT RECRIMINATIONS AGAINST THE GON DURING TIMES OF RIOT OR OTHER DISTURBANCE LED TO INCREASED DISTURBANCES AND THE BELIEVED THAT SOME RADIO STATIONS HAD

"OVERSTEPPED" THEIR RIGHTS AND "INVADED" THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS BY BROODCASTING EDITORIALS CONDUCIVE TO VIOLENCE. AS PRESIDENT, HIS DUTY WAS TO PRESERVE ORDER.

7. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, SOMOZA INDICATED THAT HIS FUTURE PLANS WERE TO FINISH HIS TERM IN OFFICE AND TO EFFECTIVELY RETIRE FROM PUBLIC LIFE -- BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY WHILE RETAINING THE LIFE-TIME SENATORSHIP HE WAS ENTITLED TO. HIS SON, HOWEVER, WOULD REMAIN I IN THE SERVICE, AS THAT WAS HIS CAREER. AS TO THE POSSIBLITY OF MAJOR SOMOZA'S SUCCEEDING TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GN, THAT WOULD DEPEND EXCLUSIVELY ON HOW WELL HE DID HIS JOB.

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6720

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8. VIVAS THEN ASKED ABOUT THE STATE OF NICARAGUA'S ECONOMY. SOMOZA ADMITTED THE NATIONAL WORK STOPPAGE HAD DONE MUCH DAMAGE.THE GON WAS TRYING TO RE-ESTABLISH CONFIDENCE. HOWEVER, IT WAS UP TO PRIVATE ENTERPRISE TO TAKE THE LEAD IN RE-ESTABLISHING THE CONFIDENCE ESSENTIAL TO THE RETURN OF THE HARD WON INTERCATIONAL CREDIT ESSENTIAL TO THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT. POLITICAL PARTIES HAD AN A PRIORI DUTY TO ESTABLISH TRANQUILITY. NICARAGUA'S FOREIGN RESERVES STOOD AT 130 BILLION CORDOBAS, SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN THE FREE CONVERTABLITY OF A STABLE CORDOBA. THE BUDGET HAS ALWAYS BEEN BALANCED OR FINANCED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO FIGHT INFLATION. ONLY WITH THE U.S. HAS NICARAGUA HAD DIFFICULTIES REGARDING CREDITS, BUT THAT THE SUSPENSIONS ARE BEING LIFTED. SOMOZA ADDED THAT THIS WAS NOT A GIFT; NICARAGUA HAD RE-EARNED ITS REPUTATION AS A SERIOUS GOVERNMENT WHICH PAID ITS DEBTS AND FULFILLED ITS OBLIGATIONS.

9. FINALLY, SOMOZA ATTRIBUTED THE LONGEVITY OF HIS FAMILY7S RULE TO ITS CONTINUED DEDICATION TO THE BEST INTERESTS OF NICARAGUA AND ITS CITIZZNS. SOMOZA GARCIA PACIFIED THE COUNTRY AND INITIATED SOCIAL

LEGISLATION AND THE LABOR CODE. REVOLUTIONARY BANK LAWS WERE PASSED  
BY HIM. LUIS SOMOZA HAD PASSED MORE SOCIAL LEGISLATION. THE FAMILY  
HAD PRODUCED TWO MARTYRS. SOMOZA SAID HE HAD INHERITED FROM PRESIDENT  
SCHICK A "BROKEN" STATE AND HAD GIVEN IT THE IMPULSE TO DEVELOP.  
THE SUCCESS OF THE SOMOZA FAMILY WAS DUE TO ITS SINCERE EFFORTS TO  
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ADVANCE THE INTERESTS OF NICARAGUA.  
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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, PGOV, PINR, SHUM, NU, (SOMOZA DEBAYLE, ANASTASIO)  
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